

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Congenital Syphilis.** By David Nabarro. 1954. Pp. 470. 95 illus. Arnold, London. (50s.)

The author has had over 30 years' experience of congenital syphilis and was director of the Venereal Diseases Clinic of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, for some 23 years. During much of this long period Dr. Nabarro has contributed addresses and papers on congenital syphilis and consequently the publication of this book has been eagerly awaited. While infantile syphilis is now rare in Britain, cases of late congenital syphilis presenting in older children and adults still provide diagnostic problems. Moreover, in less advanced countries the disease is more prevalent. For these reasons this new text-book is both welcome and valuable.

After consideration of nomenclature, Dr. Nabarro presents a fascinating historical sketch followed by a chapter on the incidence of the disease. In spite of the great reduction in infantile syphilis the author advises against complacency and will not be content until this eminently preventable infection has been totally eradicated. Although it is now widely accepted that the foetus is infected by the mother through the placenta, other methods of transmission are reviewed by the author. After a chapter on pathology, which includes a short account of the causative organism and laboratory tests, the author proceeds to the main section of almost 300 pages devoted to the symptomatology of congenital syphilis. This is dealt with on a regional basis, includes relevant case histories, and is of outstanding quality; it is, however, somewhat unbalanced, as the author has dealt at length with certain facets in which he has had a special interest—a feature which rather adds to the value of the book for the specialist but may well be misleading for the tyro. The text is generously and well illustrated and the bibliographies are a particularly valuable feature. The book is excellently produced, has a good index, and appears completely free from typographical error.

Some of Dr. Nabarro's views are very controversial and many will disagree with much that is contained in the chapters on "Third Generation Syphilis" and "Familial Susceptibility of Individual Tissues to Syphil-

itic Invasion." The section on treatment is disappointing and does not reflect current practice, in which penicillin has replaced arsenic and bismuth to a much greater degree than this book indicates. This defect, however, is perhaps inevitable, as in these days the advances of chemotherapy outpace both author and publisher.

Dr. Nabarro's book is a major contribution to the monographs on congenital syphilis and it may well be the last of its line. It should be read carefully and thoughtfully by all syphilologists.

A. C. C. D.  
S. M. L.

**Zür Pathogenese des Endogenen Ekzems.** By G. Korting, with a foreword by Prof. H. A. Gotttron. 1954. Pp. 107, 23 illus., 18 tab. Georg Thieme, Stuttgart. (DM.13.80.)

The title of this monograph exemplifies the lack of agreement and the confusion in the nomenclature of the eczemas. The author here uses the term endogenous eczema as a synonym for atopic eczema (neurodermatitis, flexural eczema). He believes that, like asthma and hayfever which are closely related to it, this type of eczema arises from "disregulation" of the autonomic nervous system.

Dr. Korting bases this theory on a detailed survey of the literature on the pathogenesis of the asthma-hayfever-eczema syndrome and on the results of the investigations carried out by him and his co-workers on cases of endogenous eczema; patients suffering from other types of eczema were used for control experiments. The reaction of the autonomic nervous system was studied by observing the response of the sweat glands to the injection of acetylcholine, the changes in skin temperature after the application of cold, and the changes in blood pressure and water metabolism after irradiation of the thalamic region with short-waves, etc. While the interpretation of the results may be open to question, Dr. Korting deserves credit for emphasizing once again that eczema is more than just a disturbance of the surface of the body.

A. F.

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### FILIALE MARSEILLAISE DE LA SOCIÉTÉ FRANÇAISE DE DERMATOLOGIE ET DE SYPHILIGRAPHIE

*V Annual Congress, 1954*

The fifth annual congress of the Filiale Marseillaise met at Marseille on Oct. 15, 16, and 17, 1954, under the presidency of Dr. Jacques Charpy.

Demonstrations, lectures, and discussions were held on "Les accidents thérapeutiques en dermatologie" (Complications of Treatment in Dermatology).